

In accordance with 20 CFR 653.107(d), we are soliciting information and comments from you regarding the State Agricultural Outreach plan. Please send any information or comments to Tim Lawhorn no later than May 5, 2014 at tlawhorn@dwd.in.gov

**State of Indiana
Department of Workforce Development
Agricultural Outreach Plan
Program Year 2014
July 1, 2014**

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development has developed its Agricultural Services Plan to describe the activities planned for providing services to the agricultural community, both agricultural employers and Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW), as described in 20 CFR Part 653.107, the WIA (Workforce Investment Act) Title I final regulations, the WIA/W-P (Wagner-Peyser) Act Planning Guidance, the Unified Planning Guidance, and applicable WIA Workforce Development regulations.

The Department of Labor Regulation 653.1 mandates that the State accomplish outreach to farm workers. The State does not have staff assigned to performing outreach services to farm workers. However, the State does meet its outreach responsibilities to MSFW with its financial support of the Consolidated Outreach Project (COP) performed through Proteus, Inc. This entity also functions as the WIA 167 grantee.

The State will continue to monitor and closely review the Minimum and Equity Service Indicators for WorkOne offices throughout the state in order to identify and correct performance issues early. The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) will work directly with WorkOne managers and Directors of Field Operation in the implementation of policies and MSFW related training.

Outreach workers will be trained in local office procedures and services as well as the benefits and protections afforded MSFWs by WorkOne Centers. The program for such training shall be pursuant to uniform guidelines developed by ETA under CFR 653.108. The SMA will continue to be a source of assistance to vendor and staff regarding the MSFW program.

The State has a close working relationship with Proteus, Inc., WIA 167 Grantee, to share resources to provide services to farm workers. Proteus staff is co-located in our WorkOne Centers and this arrangement has been a benefit to both the State and Proteus. From their initial cooperative agreement, Proteus currently has staff strategically out-stationed in South Bend, Kokomo, Columbus,

and Vincennes, which geographically quadrisects the state for enhanced delivery of services. The SMA will foster a positive working relationship between the Grantee and WorkOne staff whenever possible. Similarly, he will make Indiana's growers aware of, and encourage them to utilize Proteus services for their farm workers at every opportunity.

The State will continue to work with the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) partner to determine areas for improvement of outreach services to MSFWs with the goal of reducing duplication of effort and resource maximization.

The State will review agricultural crop activity that overlaps and complements other crop activities in the state and with bordering states to determine if combining seasonal crop activity will provide the MSFW with longer periods of employment. Where overlap in crop seasons does not exist, the State will seek non-agricultural jobs for the farm workers.

Assessment of Need

Agriculture has always been historically significant to the Hoosier state, and it continues to thrive today. Indiana consistently ranks in the top 10 for total value of agricultural products sold in the United States as well as in the top 5 for corn and soybean production in the country. The agricultural sector alone accounted for 3.3 percent of the state's GDP in 2009.

A review of PY 2011's agricultural activity shows that there were approximately 62,000 farms, ranking Indiana 5th in the nation, according to the most recent data available from NASS. In addition to corn and soybean production, the state's tomatoes (for processing), spearmint, and melon (cantaloupe/watermelon) ranked 2nd, 3rd, and 5th respectively in the United States.

The combined effects of agricultural exports alone supported an estimated 34,800 jobs statewide. About 18,100 of these jobs were on farms or in food processing activities. Purchases in the agriculture supply chain and the household spending of farm workers and other industry employees accounted for an additional 16,700 jobs.¹

(i) With just over 1,300 farms involved in fruits, and vegetables those crops also continue to be the most labor-intensive with a value of just over \$78 million. In general, the period with the greatest activity is from mid May to mid October in the southwest, extreme northern, and mid-eastern portions of Indiana.

During the past season, major labor intensive crop activities involved tomatoes, cucumbers, and market vegetables in the northern part of the state and squash, pumpkins, tobacco, and fruits in the southern part of the state. The months of July, August, and September remain as the most labor-intensive time of the

¹ Indiana Business Research Center – Indiana University Kelley School of Business.

season. Corn detasseling is still a major activity in the state during the month of July.

(ii) Estimates for the agricultural labor (MSFWs) utilized are:

Fruits: 300-400 Vegetables: 400-500, Seed Corn 200-300

With respect to numbers of workers, historically, corn (detasseling) is the crop that experiences the most notable labor shortage, accounting for 73% of H-2A activity.

(iii) Purdue University's Dept. of Agriculture Economics expects that changes from last year's crop activities will be moderate, with a return to more normal weather patterns. However, agricultural labor is projected to remain consistent. The state does not project any major change in the level of agricultural activity during the next growing season. Crop activity should remain constant. However, there may be a shortage of labor during the season in some areas of the state.

(iv) Taking into account data from the WIA 167 NFJP grantee and the Dept. of Agriculture, approximately 2,600 farmworkers are projected to be in Indiana for the coming program year.

PY 2011's MSFW activity featured an average of 323 workers per Quarter that utilized ES services. That number remained quite consistent during the period with a low of 322 during 1st Quarter CY 2012 to a high of 326 during 4th Quarter CY 2012. However, the number of MSFW contacts by ES staff ranged from a low of 5 during the 1st Quarter of CY 2012 to a high of 1,607 during the 4th Quarter, CY 2011 harvest period, but averaged 699 contacts over the PY 2011. Correspondingly, there was only estimated to be approximately 100 farmworkers in the state during the 1st Quarter CY 2011 and approximately 4,000 during the 3rd Quarter, CY 2011. Additionally, there was a total of 5,828 hours, or 728.5 days of MSFW-related activities conducted by outreach staff during PY2011.

There were a total of 1,912 Agricultural job openings during PY 2011 for an average of 478 openings per Quarter. As of 2/24/14, Indiana has approximately (41) licensed temporary agricultural labor camps (Source: Indiana Dept. of Health).

Outreach Activities

Effective 12/31/12, the contract with the service-provider, Indiana Health Centers (IHC) expired. The other participating agencies in the contract; Indiana Depts. of Education, and Child Services opted not to participate in a new contract. Despite SWA efforts to renew independently with IHC, an agreement could not be reached for the funds proposed by the SWA.

In November, 2013 Proteus, Inc., also the 167 grantee, signed a contract to become the outreach service-provider. Proteus anticipates making contact with about 950 farmworkers in the coming Program Year. Data supplied by Proteus indicates they envision providing Worker Pesticide Safety training to approximately 850 farmworkers while 100 will receive NFJP training or direct placement. Tools to conduct outreach include: personal contact, and program presentations at WorkOne offices, community colleges, and two-year institutions. Promotional materials will also be placed throughout the state at, but not limited to, those locations.

Proteus Outreach staff consists of five workers; Kokomo – 2, South Bend – 1, Columbus – 1, Vincennes – 1. Of the approximate 8,000 MSFW in the state last year, outreach workers were able to identify 3,900 farm workers and their dependents. Outreach staff will continue to seek out and locate small pockets of workers in isolated areas of the state in order to increase the ability of MSFW to access core, intensive, and training services in the One-Stop system.

The level of W-P funding provided to Proteus to be used for outreach activities during the fiscal year is expected to be \$30,000.

IDWD anticipates providing Outreach staff with updated brochures on migrant and seasonal farmworker services available from the DWD. These brochures will also be posted in the licensed labor camps and the Outreach offices. Additional opportunities for Outreach staff include working with crew leaders and employers in creating an awareness of the services available in filling openings, crew leader registration, and interpretation/translation services that can be found with the local office. Referrals are made as needed for job search, placement assistance, or other needs with which IDWD can assist. Approximately 45 licensed temporary labor camps and 20 other farmworker employers throughout Indiana represent supplementary contacts prospects. A data summary report will be provided to IDWD and other funding sources at the end of every migrant season, as well as an annual report. These reports are a compilation of all the information gathered from farmworkers through the Outreach intake and referral assessment process.

Services provided to MSFWs through the Indiana WorkOne Network (aka One-Stop delivery system)

The State Monitor Advocate will work with the Director of One-Stop Operations to provide technical assistance to staff of the One-Stop delivery system, including training in referral of migrant and seasonal farm workers (MSFW) to agricultural and non-agricultural job orders and coordination of services with Consolidated Outreach Project (COP) and the National Farm Worker Jobs Program (NFJP) / 167 WIA Grantee to improve services to MSFW.

DWD will provide MSFWs with information about, and access to, applicant services available through our WorkOne Centers. To ensure MSFWs have access to services at our One-Stop Centers, the State Monitor Advocate will seek ways to increase the ability for all those involved in MSFW service delivery to be able to dialogue in order to understand and improve on their particular roles and functions. The State Monitor Advocate will be meeting with service providers at the local level to identify priority issues and to develop a continuous consensus building process to determine the appropriate technical assistance necessary for improving service delivery for the MSFW customer.

The State Monitor Advocate will continue to carry out on-site MSFW compliance reviews of selected local One-Stop Centers. Desk audits using the S1497 Report, Indicators of Compliance, will be the method by which the SMA will monitor statewide service to MSFW. DWD will continue to collect data on services provided to MSFW and will strive to meet and improve the required performance standards.

Services to MSFWs through the One-Stop Deliver System are delivered via bilingual (English and Spanish) case managers in selected offices to assist both job seekers and employers in requesting employment-related assistance. Services may include:

- Job search and placement assistance;
- Career counseling and planning;
- Labor market information;
- Supportive services referrals;
- Financial aid information;
- Group/individual counseling;
- Short-term pre-vocational training;
- Literacy/English as a Second Language assistance;
- Occupational skills training;
- On-the-job training;
- Skill upgrading;
- Job readiness training; and
- Emergency services.

Services provided to agricultural employers through the Indiana WorkOne Network

DWD continues to provide agricultural employers assistance with their labor needs. When local workers are not available, DWD provides technical assistance to growers to aid them in accessing the interstate agricultural recruitment system.

Our local office staff continues to provide farm labor contractors assistance in preparing application for certification with the U.S. Department of Labor.

Indiana Career Connect is the official labor exchange service for the State of Indiana. Indiana Career Connect boosted the level of labor exchange services available to agricultural employers. Employers are able to access Indiana Career Connect at any time, on their own, or can work with WorkOne staff for a staff assisted approach. Indiana Career Connect has the largest number of job listings in Indiana, and it currently lists over ten times the jobs that Indiana's previous labor exchange system listed.

Previous year's history (based on PY 2011 data)

Number of agricultural job orders / openings received - 105 / 7960

Number of agricultural job orders filled – 13

Percent to be filled – 87

Number of interstate clearance orders received – 1

Number of interstate clearance orders initiated – 13

Plan for upcoming year (based on estimated data)

Number of agricultural job orders expected to be received - 15

Number of agricultural job orders projected to be filled – 110

Percent to be filled – 87

Estimated number of interstate clearance orders the state will receive – 3

Estimated number of interstate clearance orders the state will initiate – 15

In accordance with 20 CFR Subpart B, 653.107, and as prescribed by Region V, the Monitor Advocate participated in the preparation of the agricultural plan and has been afforded the opportunity to approve and comment on the plan. Such review indicates that the plan has been prepared properly, omitting none of the prescribed requirements and properly describes the activities planned for providing services to both agricultural employers and migrant seasonal farmworkers.

WIA Section 167 NFJP grantee, Indiana Farm Bureau, Purdue Agriculture Extension, PathStone Corporation, Indiana Family & Social Services, Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, Indiana Dept. of Education, and Teaching & Mentoring Communities were solicited for information and suggestions in the formulation of this plan and/or provided the opportunity to comment.

Summary of the MSFW Complaint System Activity

The State had few complaints filed by migrant and seasonal farmworkers during PY 2013. The State continues to provide coordination and referral of complaints to the responsible enforcement agencies.